

Fifth Grade Writing Lesson #1 with Descriptive Prompt

Title:	Lasting Impressions
Grade:	Fifth Grade
Core Standards:	4050-0801 4050-0802 4050-0804 4050-0806
Objective/Purpose:	Students will be able to incorporate sensory details into a piece of descriptive writing. Students will improve a piece of writing by using precise and vivid language and word choice.
Time Required:	Three or four class periods (45 minutes each)
Teacher Materials:	Picture books incorporating sensory details, e.g.: <i>Owl Moon</i> , Jane Yolen <i>Miss Rumphius</i> , Barbara Cooney <i>Twilight Comes Twice</i> , Ralph Fletcher Other books by Eve Bunting Other books by Cynthia Rylant Topic/detail graphic organizer
Student Materials:	Pictures or postcards (one per student)
What to Do:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pass out pictures or postcards to each student. Instruct students to write a description of the scene. Share student writing as time permits.2. Read aloud one of the suggested titles (or a title of your choice) that incorporates the use of strong sensory details. Have students listen for phrases that draw on the senses of sight, sound, taste, touch, and hearing.3. After finishing the book, chart sensory details on the board or a graphic organizer. Discuss with students how using a variety of sensory details improves a piece of writing.

4. Have students return to their picture or postcard description and underline examples of sensory details in different colors. For example, underline sight details in red and touch details in green. Discuss which type of details students focused on and which need improvement.
5. Have students return to pictures or postcards and fill in the graphic organizer/sensory web with additional sensory details.
6. Have students revise their descriptive paragraphs by including additional sensory details and vivid language. Have students compare the original and final versions of their paragraphs.

Writing Prompt: Think of a place that you can remember clearly and that is important to you. Think of the sights, sounds, and smells that come rushing back into your memory. Use words to paint a picture of this place that would make a reader feel as if he or she were right there.

Student Paper #1
(Fifth Grade Student)

Title: "My Grandparents' House"

My Grandparents House

As soon as I walk in their house the warm musty smell of my Grandparents house fills me with a feeling of safety. My Grandma comes in from the kitchen and my Grandpa puts down his book. My Grandma's warm loving hug covers me. Then the strong embrace of my grandpa makes me feel safe. Later in the evening the calming sound of people talking and my brothers playing fill my ears. Out in the field a bird calls.

At dinner the excellent taste of my grandmas cooking makes me happy.

My bed is perfect, the mattress is firm and soft, the sheets cool but warm. That is my favorite place.

**Student Paper #1
(Fifth Grade Student)
Six Traits Scores and Commentary**

Title: “My Grandparents’ House”

Ideas and Content: [5]

- Ideas are clear and focused.
- Details are meaningful to the author. Example: “Then the strong embrace of my grandpa makes me feel safe.”
- The writing gives insight into why the place is important to the author.

Organization: [5]

- The writing flows effectively from idea to idea.
- The presentation of information moves the reader through the text.
- Important moments (such as when the grandparents are hugging the writer) are “slowed down” and elaborated.

Voice: [4]

- The tone adds interest to the writing and is appropriate to the audience.
- Voice has an honest and soothing feel.

Word Choice: [4]

- Word choice is natural and effective.
- The writer includes specific details such as the “calming sound of people talking...”

Sentence Fluency: [3]

- Sentences flow easily and with rhythm.
- The paper lends itself to being read aloud.
- Sentences are correctly constructed and hang together.

Conventions: [4]

- Spelling is generally correct.
- Errors tend to be few and do not get in the way of meaning.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Revise for a stronger conclusion.
- Add lively verbs.
- Add some variety to length of sentences.
- Add commas to compound sentences.

Student Paper #2
(Fifth Grade Student)

Title: "My Backyard"

MY Backyard

My backyard is a wonderful place. With a tall wooden playground that we flip off into the trampoline. As we jump the cool breeze of wind runs into our mouths. Then we lay down on the cool refreshing grass. As we lay we hear cars zooming by with their engines roaring. The smell of dust fills our noses as we run around playing tag. We play from when we get home from school until dinner time practicing tricks and just having fun. My backyard is a place to let out your frustration when none will listen to you or do anything that you agree with. My backyard is a place where the cool breeze cools you down from your work. Where you can breathe the clean air and smell spring all around you. The flowers surround you with relaxation, and their leaves feel like velvet. My backyard is the best place for me and my brother to have fun.

**Student Paper #2
(Fifth Grade Student)
Six Traits Scores and Commentary**

Title: “My Backyard”

Ideas and Content: [4]

- The topic is specific and a manageable size.
- Ideas are fresh and help the reader to see things in new ways. (Example: “...a place to let out your frustration when no one will listen to you...”)
- The reader is not left with unanswered questions; the reader can picture the scene clearly.

Organization: [4]

- The text organization is strong enough to move the reader through the text without confusion.

Voice: [4]

- The voice is relaxed and honest.
- The tone of the writing adds interest because of rich and vivid descriptions.

Word Choice: [4]

- The writing has strong sensory details. (Example: “...cool breeze of wind runs into our mouths.”)
- There is some good use of similes and metaphors. (Example: “...leaves feel like velvet...”)

Sentence Fluency: [4]

- The sentence structure and length enhance meaning.
- Sentences are of appropriate length and feel relaxed.
- The paper lends itself to being read aloud.

Conventions: [4]

- Spelling is generally correct.
- There are some errors needing correction before the paper is published.

Areas Needing Improvement:

- Strengthen lead and conclusion.
- Add lively verbs.
- Polish for conventions.

Student Paper #3
(Fifth Grade Student)

Untitled

I remember Lagoon because my family goes there once every summer. I remember the rollercoaster the white one and when it went speeding down the track you could feel the wind blowing in your hair and your face. And as your going down it feels like your going to fly out of your seat.

But anyway when you walk by the food stands you can smell the fresh baked stuff. The cotton candy tastes good as it melts in your mouth and you feel the sugar on your tongue it taste really good any way have more work to do bye.

**Student Paper #3
(Fifth Grade Student)
Six Traits Scores and Commentary**

Untitled

Ideas and Content: [3]

- The topic is fairly broad.
- The writer seems to be drawing on knowledge or experience, but has difficulty going from general observations to specifics.

Organization: [2]

- This paper needs the most work in the area of organization.
- The writer needs a recognizable introduction and conclusion.

Voice: [3]

- The voice is earnest and pleasing but not compelling.
- It lacks individuality.

Word Choice: [3]

- Word choice is adequate and correct but not colorful.
- It is marred by passive rather than active verbs.

Sentence Fluency: [3]

- The paper hums along with a steady beat.
- The use of creative and appropriate transitions would enhance the fluency.

Conventions: [3]

- End punctuation is generally correct, and most words are capitalized correctly.
- Internal punctuation is faulty, and the spelling of some words is incorrect.

Student Paper #4
(Fifth Grade Student)

Title: "Arcade"

Arcade

when you walk in the arcade you
can see colors like gold, blue, green
and it makes you feel happy and
excited. And when you start playing
the games you can feel the
cold controllers touch your warm hands
and when you win a prize or the
game it makes you feel unstoppable.
you can hear the other games
ringing and clanging and when you
hear the quarters in your pocket
you just want to keep on playing
so come to the arcade and have fun!!!

**Student Paper #4
(Fifth Grade Student)
Six Traits Scores and Commentary**

Title: “Arcade”

Ideas and Content: [3]

- The writer generally stays on the topic, but lacks ideas that are fresh and original.

Organization: [3]

- The sequencing shows logic, and the pacing is fairly well controlled.
- The paper ends abruptly, without a recognizable conclusion.
- The opening could also be more inviting.

Voice: [3]

- The writer seems sincere and pleasant but not compelling.
- The writer appears to play it safe and does not reveal whom he or she is.

Word Choice: [3]

- Familiar words and phrases communicate and show an attempt at colorful language.
- Words and phrases are functional but lack active verbs.

Sentence Fluency: [2]

- Parts of the text invite expressive oral reading, but sentence structure is lacking.
- Endless conjunctions (“and”, “and so”, etc.) create too many run-on sentences.

Conventions: [3]

- Spelling is usually correct, but there are some internal punctuation problems.
- The paper needs paragraph and fine-tune editing.

Fifth Grade Writing Lesson #2 with Science Prompt

Title:	Lights On!
Grade:	Fifth
Core Standards:	Language Arts Standard 8. Students write daily to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences. Science Standard 4, Objective 2. Analyze the behavior of current electricity.
Objectives/Purpose:	Students will define a complete circuit and write directions for making a complete circuit.
Time Required:	Once students have met the benchmarks for Science Standard 4, two 30-minute sessions are required for writing.
Teacher Materials:	A model, drawing, or diagram of a complete electrical circuit. Materials to make a complete electrical circuit: D-cell battery 2-volt light bulb with a matching base Pieces of insulated wire (stripped on each end) Electrical switch Selected texts or instruction manuals
Suggested Books:	<i>Switch On, Switch Off</i> , ISBN 006445097X <i>Battery Science: Make Widgets That Work and Gadgets That Go</i> , ISBN 159174251X <i>Electricity and Magnetism</i> , E. Humberstone, ISBN 0746009941 <i>Electricity</i> , ISBN 0531153665 <i>Electricity: Real Science Made Easy</i> , ISBN 1571459685 <i>Electricity</i> (Eyewitness Book Series), ISBN 0756613884
Student Materials:	Writing paper Pencil Teacher-provided materials to make a complete circuit.

What to Do:

1. **Pre-write** (plan). Review books about electricity and complete electrical circuits (see suggested books). Tell students to pay close attention to the directions for building a complete electrical circuit.
2. Show students the model or diagram (previously made) of a complete electrical circuit. Ask students to define a complete electrical circuit. Write their definition on the board.
3. Ask students to recall how the complete circuit model was made. As a whole class, in a small group or with a partner, students explain how they made a complete circuit. Have students refer to the materials (see above list) and completed model as they develop a list of steps to make a circuit. Provide a sequencing graphic organizer for students to record the steps.
4. During whole class instruction, review the graphic organizer. Model how to take the steps listed on the graphic organizer and write them in a paragraph. Model how to use transition words (first, second, next, then, after, finally) to create a strong sequence structure in writing.
5. Provide students with the prompt. Explain that their assignment is to pretend that they are participating in a science fair. For their science fair project they made a working model of a complete electrical circuit. As people visit their booth, the students need to define a complete circuit and explain the steps for making one.
6. **Write** (compose). Using information generated by the class, the steps listed on their graphic organizers, and their own background experiences, students write the instructions for making a complete electrical circuit. They model their instructions on an example provided by the teacher and on samples in the texts.
7. **Revise** (improve). Students read their instructions to a partner. Based on their partner's comments or questions, students improve their instructions by clarifying ideas and adding descriptive detail. Finally, students revise their draft to make sure all information is included and ready to read to someone who is visiting their science fair booth.
8. **Edit** (proofread). Students review their instructions one final time. They check for correct capitalization, spelling, and punctuation.
9. **Publish** (share). Students rewrite their final copy on the provided science fair sheet.

Writing Prompt: You are participating in the fifth grade science fair. For your science fair project you made a working model of a complete electrical circuit. As people visit your booth, you must be able to explain your project. Write the definition of a complete circuit and explain the steps for making one. Follow the steps listed on your graphic organizer and use sequencing transition words to write complete paragraphs.

As an alternative or extension to the prompt, ask students to explain what would happen if one or more of the circuit components were faulty (e.g., loose connection, burned-out light bulb, or drained battery).

Teacher Notes: This lesson focuses on writing for a specific audience and for a specific purpose. Therefore, it does not provide details for teachers or students about how to make a complete electrical circuit. Prior to this lesson, teachers should provide students with lessons that build the knowledge required to meet the benchmarks in Science Standard 4.

**Student Paper #1
(Fifth Grade Student)
Exemplary Example
Title: "Lights On!"**

"Welcome to my Science Fair booth."

A complete circuit is an electrical circuit that goes in a full circle without stopping. The electricity starts and stops at the same place. The starting place has to have power. Once the electricity goes around the circuit it goes to the power where it starts all over again in the circle. To make my complete circuit I took a piece of wire and cut it into three pieces. I wrapped one end around the lightbulb base and the other end around the switch. Then I got the other piece of wire and wrapped it around the other side of the switch. Next I wrapped the end around the battery base. With the last piece of wire I wrapped one end around the empty side of the battery base and the other end around the lightbulb base. Finally, I screwed in the light bulb. Presto! It worked!

"Thank you for visiting our Science Fair."

**Student Paper #1
(Fifth Grade Student)
Six Traits Scores and Commentary
Exemplary Example**

Title: “Lights On!”

Ideas and Content: [5]

- The paper answers the prompt in a clear, correct, and precise manner.
- The writer has knowledge and experience about the topic.
- Details, however, are limited. More specifics would add depth to the piece.

Organization: [5]

- The introductory sentence defines the piece.
- The conclusion is lively and brings the writing to a satisfying close.
- Thoughtful transition words keep the story flowing and connected.
- The structure matches the purpose and the audience.

Voice: [3]

- The writer seems sincere, but not fully engaged or involved.
- Most of the writing is obvious, general, and direct.
- Only the final sentence reveals any energy.

Word Choice: [3]

- The words are functional and correct.

Sentence Fluency: [5]

- Sentences are strong. They vary in length and structure.
- The writer uses appropriate connectives to show sequence, (“then,” “next,” “last,” and “finally”).
- The writing flows and reads naturally.

Conventions: [5]

- The writer demonstrates control over standard writing conventions.
- A paragraph or two would enhance the organization of the piece.
- Errors are few.

OVERALL SCORE: [4.5]

Student Paper #2
(Fifth Grade Student)
Above Average Example
Title: "Lights On!"

"Welcome to my Science Fair booth."

Electrical Circuits

To get electricity where you need it, you have to have a complete circuit. A circuit goes from one place and back again without interrupting. Where it starts must have power like a battery. A complete circuit keeps moving in a circle through the power.

If you take wire in 3 pieces you wrap one end of the wire around a light bulb and the other end around a switch.

Second take another piece of wire and wrap it around the switch end. With this piece of wire wrap the other end around the battery. Third, get your last piece of wire and wrap it around the battery. The last end of wire goes around the light bulb base. Screw the light bulb in.

"Thank you for visiting our Science Fair."

**Student Paper #2
(Fifth Grade Student)
Six Traits Scores and Commentary
High Average Example**

**Title: “Lights On!”
“Electrical Circuits”**

Ideas and Content: [4]

- The ideas and content accurately answer the prompt.
- Limited details suggest the writer’s knowledge is not in-depth.
- The writer seems to draw from knowledge and experience.

Organization: [5]

- The introductory sentence establishes the topic and purpose.
- The concluding sentence shows the result of the circuit process and brings the writing to a satisfying close.
- Transition words are thoughtful and precise; they make the process clear (“second,” “third,” and “last”).

Voice: [3]

- The writer speaks directly to the audience, but shows little sincerity or attachment to the topic.
- The tone is pleasant; however it lacks energy or enthusiasm.

Word Choice: [3]

- The words are adequate and correct in a general way. They answer the prompt, but show little creativity or precision.

Sentence Fluency: [5]

- Sentences vary in length and in structure.
- Varied sentence beginnings add variety.
- Transitions appropriately enhance the purpose.

Conventions: [5]

- The writer demonstrates a good grasp of standard writing conventions.
- Errors are few. A final proofreading would make this piece ready to publish.

OVERALL SCORE: [4]

**Student Paper #3
(Fifth Grade Student)
Below Average Example
Title: "Lights On!"**

"Welcome to my Science Fair booth."

A circuit goes in a circle, power makes the electricity in a circle. if
the power stops the circuit is open. I made my circuit with wire around
lightbulb on each side as one end of the wire around the battery
and the other end on battery with a switch. the wire around
the switch and lightbulb makes it work.

"Thank you for visiting our Science Fair."

**Student Paper #3
(Fifth Grade Student)
Six Traits Scores and Commentary**

Title: “Lights On!”

Ideas and Content: [2]

- The writer understands the purpose for writing, but the information provided is limited and unclear.
- The writer does not show an understanding of the process of making a complete circuit.

Organization: [2]

- The paper has a topic sentence and a concluding sentence that addresses the prompt.
- Connections between ideas are confusing.
- An internal structure is lacking.

Voice: [1]

- The development of the topic is so limited that no point of view is present.

Word Choice: [1]

- Words are nonspecific and convey very little meaning.
- A limited vocabulary impairs the author’s message or purpose.

Sentence Fluency: [1]

- Three sentences are very short; the fourth is too long and rambling.
- The writing does not invite expressive oral reading.

Conventions: [1]

- Errors in punctuation, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and usage are distracting and make the text difficult to follow.
- Paper requires extensive editing.

OVERALL SCORE: [1.5]

Fifth Grade Writing Lesson #3 with Social Studies Prompt

Title:	Incredible Americans
Grade:	Fifth
Core Standards:	Language Arts Standard 8. Students write daily to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences. Social Studies Standard 6, Objective 1a. Recognize primary explorers, events, and military leaders from the Constitution to the Civil War.
Objective/Purpose:	The student will research a famous American and learn about the contributions this person made to the history and growth of the United States.
Time Required:	1-2 weeks
Teacher Materials:	Social studies textbook Selected biographies Selected Internet sites Encyclopedias
Suggested Books:	Texts from the following series are helpful for introducing students to the genre of biographies and autobiographies: Time for Kids Biography series Scholastic Biography series Picture Book Biography series Rookie Biography series History Makers biography series Puffin Newbery Library series Who Was? series Don't Know Much About series
Suggested Websites:	American Memory Project (Library of Congress)

Student Materials:

- Incredible Americans Report Note Sheet (teacher provided)
- Incredible Americans Biography Outline (teacher provided)
- Access to computer/Internet
- Pencil
- Writing paper

What to Do:

Prior to this writing lesson, teachers should provide students with lessons to build the knowledge required to meet the benchmarks in Social Studies Standard 6. Students should have enough background knowledge about historical leaders from the Constitution to the Civil War to thoughtfully select one person to research and write about.

1. Organize students into small groups. Instruct each group to brainstorm and list the historical figures who made significant contributions to the United States from the establishment of the Constitution to the Civil War.
2. Conduct a whole class review of the historical figures. Each group presents its list, and all names are compiled into a final whole class list.
3. Provide students with the prompt. Explain that their assignment is to write a one- to two-page biography about one historical figure from the class list. Students select an individual to write about.
4. **Pre-write** (plan). As a whole class, independently, or in student pairs, read aloud several biographies. As a class, identify information that should be included in a biography. Establish a list of required information (birth, family life, political career, contribution to the United States, etc.) to include in their biography—a rubric.
5. Based on the established list of required information, provide students with graphic organizers and/or an outline of a biography. Students begin to brainstorm and list the information they know about the figure they have chosen. In order to complete their outlines or graphic organizers, students begin to conduct research and take notes.
6. As necessary, provide mini-lessons appropriate to conducting research and writing a biography (e.g., how to take notes from texts and Internet resources; writing in time-order or sequence-order; including important information rather than frivolous details; etc.).

7. **Write** (compose). After researching and taking notes (4-5 days), students draft their biography. Remind them to use information from three sources and to follow the graphic organizer or outline.
8. **Revise** (improve). Students read their biography to a partner. Based on the list of required information and their partner's comments or questions, students improve their drafts. Encourage them to clarify main points and add descriptive detail. Finally, students revise their biography and verify that all required information is included.
9. **Edit** (proofread). Students review their papers one final time. They check for correct capitalization, spelling, and punctuation.
10. **Publish** (share). Finally, students type their biography (at home, in the school computer lab, or in their classroom). Provide time for students to share their reports with the class.

Writing Prompt: There are many individuals who have contributed to the strength of the United States. Select a famous historical figure who made a significant contribution to the United States during the period from the Constitution to the Civil War. Use and list at least three text or Internet sources to write a 1-2 page biography of the figure.

Possible Extensions:

1. Conduct an Incredible Americans Play. Students dress as their famous American and, while speaking in first person, tell their famous American's life history.
2. Create an Incredible Americans Hall of Fame. Students collect photographs, famous speeches, historical documents, and/or inventions and create a display of their historical figure's accomplishments. Include captions and important notes on the display. Post the displays on a large mural.

Student Paper #1
(Fifth Grade Student)
Exemplary Example (Sam Houston)
Title: "Incredible Americans"

Sam Houston 1793 - 1863

Sam Houston was born in Rockbridge County near Lexington, VA, on March 2, 1793. He received only a basic education. At age 16, he ran away from home and joined a Cherokee tribe. The tribe gave him a special name, "The Raven". Sam's jobs were a school teacher, a soldier, an Agent to the Cherokee, a lawyer and a politician. Sam married 3 times. His first wife was Eliza Allen and the marriage lasted less than 2 months. His second wife was a Cherokee Indian named Tiana Rodgers. Margaret Moffette Lea was his third wife; she was a very calming influence on Sam. They had 8 children and remained married until his death. Many of Sam's friends are now famous, including Andrew Jackson, James Bowie and Stephen Austin.

Sam entered politics in 1818 when he became the Attorney General of Nashville. In 1822, he became a member of the Tennessee House of Representatives. In 1827 he became Governor of Tennessee.

In 1835 Sam moved to Texas. He signed the Texas Declaration of Independence from Mexico on March 2, 1836. In 1836 Sam lead the 800 man Texas Army into the Battle of San Jacinto against Santa Anna and his 1500 man Mexican Army. This became the shortest battle in history. The Texans won the battle in only 19 minutes.

Sam Houston was the 2nd President of the Texas Republic from 1836 – 1838. He was elected again as the 4th President from 1841 – 1844. Texas became a state in 1845. Sam served as a U.S. Senator from the new state of Texas from 1846-1859, where he was known for his staunch Unionism and friendship to the Cherokee Indians. He became Governor of Texas in 1859, making him the only person in history to be elected Governor of two different states. Sam did not want Texas to join the Confederate States of America. He was kicked out of the Governor's office for refusing an oath of loyalty to the Confederacy.

The city of Houston was named in Sam's honor. Houston was originally the Capitol of Texas, later the Capitol was moved to Austin.

Sam died at 6:15 pm on July 26, 1863. He was 70 years old. Sam is buried in the Oakwood Cemetery in Huntsville, Texas.

**Student Paper #1: Scores
(Fifth Grade Student)
Six Traits Scores and Commentary
Exemplary Example (Sam Houston)**

Title: “Incredible Americans”

Ideas and Content: [5]

- The paper is clear and focused.
- Details are relevant and provide the reader with important information about Houston’s character.

Organization: [4]

- The order and structure follows a time-order sequence that moves the reader through the paper.
- An introduction and conclusion would strengthen the overall structure.

Voice: [3]

- Parts of the paper are engaging.
- The writer does not provide personal insights or a unique perspective.

Word Choice: [3]

- Words communicate but fail to capture the reader’s imagination or make Sam Houston a more compelling character.
- The language is functional and general.

Sentence Fluency: [4]

- Sentences vary in length as well as in structure. This variety provides for smooth, expressive oral reading.
- Sentences are constructed correctly, but a few more connectives would show how ideas relate to one another.

Conventions: [5]

- The writer demonstrates a solid grasp of standard writing conventions.
- Errors are few. Minor touch-ups would make this piece ready to publish.

OVERALL SCORE: [4]

Eli Whitney

Eli Whitney was born on December 8, 1765 in Westborough which is in Massachusetts. He graduated from Yale College in New England. He left New England and headed toward the South when only 27 years old. Eli thought of becoming a lawyer, but like most graduates today, you have to pay off debts and get a job. So, Whitney became a private tutor on a plantation in Georgia. Eli quickly learned there that the Southern farmers needed help to make the growing of cotton profitable. Long-staple cotton could only be grown along the coast. Some farmers fields had sticky green seeds that took a long time to pick out of the cotton. Whitney had an employer named Catherine Greene who encouraged him to come up with a solution to help with the cotton seeds.

Whitney knew if he invented a machine that would make it easier to remove the seeds from cotton, he could go to the federal government for a patent. A patent is to own rights to something. If he owned rights to it he could hope to make great money from it. Whitney kept on working on this machine through the whole winter and spring in a secret workshop that Catherine helped provide. Within those seasons he invented the cotton gin! The cotton gin was a small machine that was hand cranked. But owning the right to an invention and making money for it are two different things. Eli and his partner tried to make as many gins as possible, sell them to throughout Georgia and the South, and make the farmers pay more for doing the gin for them. They charged $\frac{2}{5}$ of the money earned -- paid them in cotton itself.

This is when all the trouble began. Farmers from all Georgia felt like they had to pay a lot more tax than they should. Some farmers copied Eli's invention and said it was a "new" invention. Whitney's partner wanted to sue these people, but they couldn't until 1800.

Student Paper #2
(Fifth Grade Student)
Exemplary Example (Eli Whitney)
Title: "Incredible Americans"

South Carolina agreed to buy Eli's cotton gin patent for \$50,000. Whitney and his partner also sold their patent to North Carolina and Tennessee. Eli died when he was 60 years old. Today many farmers still use the cotton gin.

Some people in the United States say that the cotton gin increased slavery because farmers in the South were making more fields of cotton and needed more slaves to plant them. But other people believe it decreased slavery because the cotton gin did the work instead of the slaves doing it. I believe that Eli Whitney's invention helped decrease slavery in the South.

**Student Paper #2: Scores
(Fifth Grade Student)
Six Traits Scores and Commentary
Exemplary Example (Eli Whitney)**

Title: “Incredible Americans”

Ideas and Content: [5]

- The information is clear, focused, and accurate.
- Relevant details and personal insight support the main ideas.

Organization: [4]

- The writing structure is easy to follow and understand; however, the writer abandons the time-order sequence and moves to commentary about Whitney’s invention of the cotton gin.
- An introduction and conclusion would strengthen the writing.

Voice: [4]

- The tone of the writing adds interest and allows the writer’s personality and opinions to shine through.
- Occasionally, the writer’s style is too casual for the purpose.

Word Choice: [3]

- The writing communicates both facts and personal insight.
- The choice of words is general and not compelling.

Sentence Fluency: [5]

- Sentences are well built and allow the writing to flow.
- Variety in sentence structure and length add energy and originality.

Conventions: [5]

- The spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar are generally correct.
- Paragraphs are sound.
- Some conventions are manipulated for stylistic effects.

OVERALL SCORE: [4]

#3

Student Paper #3
(Fifth Grade Student)
Average Example (Dolley Madison)
Title: "Incredible Americans"

I am doing my report on Dolley Madison because I thought it would be fun to learn something new about her so this is what I found out about her. Well this is what I found out, ^{she Dolley} ^{she was born in Guilford County} she was born on May 20, 1768, she was born while her Virginia parents were temporarily in North Carolina. Dolley was raised at Scotchtown near Ashland, Virginia, in 1783. Then her family moved to Philadelphia. Later she was 21 years old, she got married in 1790 January 7, at Pine Street Meeting house to John Todd they lived in a modest three story brick house at the corner of Fourth and Walnut Street. Then her husband and her infant both died in a yellow fever epidemic. Dolley and her other son barely survived. Then she married James Madison. She was seventeen years younger than her husband. It was her decision to remain in the White House until she had secured the safety of George Washington's portrait, even as British troops bore down upon Washington D.C., during the war in 1812, it remains a staple of American Mythology. By the time Dolley Payne Todd Madison attended her husbands inaugural in 1809, she had already ~~served~~ ^{served} intermittently as

#3

**Student Paper #3
(Fifth Grade Student)
Average Example (Dolley Madison)
Title: "Incredible Americans"**

presidential hostess during Jefferson administration. Dolley was aware of the perks, responsibilities, and the criticism inherent in the job and was first inaugural ball and appeared at numerous events both with and without her husband. Dolley was a Washington hostess. Dolley is best known to us today for her flight from Washington in August in 1814. Her first child John Payne Todd born in February in 1792 and William Temple arrived a year later. James was 42 years old and Dolley was 26 when they got married. Mrs. Madison helped Jefferson when he entertained guests also entertained frequently on her own. If it was not for Dolley George Washington's painting would not be in the whitehouse today she thought that everyone should have and education. She was the bravest first lady in American History, she was a important lady in the us. Her mothers name is Mary Coles Payne and her dads name is John Payne.

THE END

**Student Paper #3: Scores
(Fifth Grade Student)
Six Traits Scores and Commentary
Average Example (Dolley Madison)**

Title: “Incredible Americans”

Ideas and Content: [3]

- The ideas are reasonably clear, but too many details and personal opinions are not relevant or important.

Organization: [2]

- The writing begins in a logical time-order sequence, but quickly loses focus.
- Facts are random and not connected.
- Lack of an introduction, conclusion, and paragraphs make the writing difficult to follow.

Voice: [2]

- The writing communicates facts and ideas, but fails to compel the reader.
- On occasion, the writing tone and style are too casual for the purpose (e.g., “I thought it would be fun”).

Word Choice: [3]

- The writing communicates both facts and personal insight. However, the overall choice of words is nonspecific and casual.
- A few words show some understanding of more specific vocabulary.

Sentence Fluency: [3]

- Most sentences are complete, but there is little variety in structure.
- Longer sentences appear to come directly from the writer’s research notes.

Conventions: [3]

- Punctuation and grammar are generally correct.
- A few usage errors affect the meaning.

OVERALL SCORE: [2.5]

Student Paper #4
(Fifth Grade Student)
Below Average Example (John Adams)
Title: "Incredible Americans"

Mrs. Adams had a baby on Oct 30, 1735. name was John Adams. He was born in Quincy mass. He went to a school called Harvard college he graduated in 1755. John Adams was the first vice-president of the United States of America. He beat Thomas Jefferson to become the second president of the United States of America in 1796 But his vice-president was Jefferson.

John Adams lost to Jefferson in 1800. His nickname to the citizens was the Atlas of Independence. He got married to Abigail Smith. They had six kids and one became president of the United States of America (John Quincy Adams). Their marriage lasted from 1774-1818. He also had a career as a lawyer. He was against the stamp act in 1765. he also helped make the declaration of independence in 1777-1782

The End

**Student Paper #4: Scores
(Fifth Grade Student)
Six Traits Scores and Commentary
Below Average Example (John Adams)**

Title: “Incredible Americans”

Ideas and Content: [2]

- Lacks a clear focus, and topic isn’t fully developed.
- Information provided is unclear.

Organization: [1]

- The writing needs a clear sense of direction.
- Ideas are confusing and random.
- Lack of an introduction, conclusion, and paragraphs makes the writing difficult to follow.

Voice: [1]

- The writer seems disconnected and rushed.
- Information presented is limited, lifeless, and lacks a point of view.

Word Choice: [2]

- Words are nonspecific and functional.
- Limited vocabulary impairs the expression of important facts.

Sentence Fluency: [2]

- Sentences are either short and choppy or rambling.
- The paper is difficult to follow and read with expression.

Conventions: [2]

- The writer shows some control over standard conventions.
- Paragraphs and appropriate transitions are missing.

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OVERALL SCORE: [2]

Fifth Grade Writing Lesson #4 with Science Prompt

Title:	Phases of Matter
Grade:	Fifth
Core Standards:	Language Arts Standard 8. Students write daily to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences. Science Standard 1, Objective 2a. Identify the physical properties of matter.
Objective/Purpose:	The students will write an expository paper describing their experiences with three states of matter.
Time Required:	Two or three 45-minute class periods
Teacher Materials:	Science textbook
Suggested Books:	<i>Dry Ice Investigations</i> , ISBN 0924886153 <i>Solids, Liquids and Gases</i> , ISBN 0924886277 Great Explorations in Math and Science series
Student Materials:	Science textbook, chart paper, markers

What to Do:

Prior to this writing lesson, teachers should provide students with lessons to build the knowledge required to meet the benchmarks in Science Standard 1.

(The text *Dry Ice Investigations* is an excellent resource for providing students with memorable, hands-on learning experiences about the states of matter. Students choose questions they want to answer, then plan and conduct their own investigations. The text includes complete lists of materials and reproducible sheets for segments of the activities, overheads, and student science journal pages.)

Day One:

1. Organize students into small groups. Provide each group with chart paper and markers. Ask each group to divide the chart into three columns. Label the columns "Solid," "Liquid," and "Gas." Students will discuss and list the characteristics of each state of matter with their group.
2. Each group will choose three people to report, one for each column. As each group reports, students will note any characteristic they would like to add or any characteristic that should be in another column. Display group charts around the room.

Day Two:

3. **Pre-write** (plan). Provide students with the prompt. Explain that they are to imagine themselves as a water molecule as they progress through the three states of matter. Discuss, as a class, how they might look, what they might feel, what they might hear, what they might see, and how they might taste in each state. Students take notes as the discussion progresses.
4. **Write:** (compose). From their notes, information generated by their group's charts, and personal knowledge, students write a first draft of their paper. Remind them to use factual information in a creative way to show how a water molecule goes through the three states of matter.

Day Three:

5. **Revise** (improve). Students read their drafts to a partner. Based on their partner's comments or questions, students improve their papers by clarifying ideas and adding descriptive detail. Finally, students revise to make sure all information is included and ready to rewrite on their final copy.
6. **Edit** (proofread). Students review their papers one final time. They check for correct capitalization, spelling, and punctuation.

Day Four:

7. **Publish** (share). Have students move into groups of four or five. Each student reads his/her final paper to the group. After all have read their papers, ask students to choose one to be shared with the class. Ask them to choose the one that was most factual, the one that was most humorous, the one that was most original, etc.

Writing Prompt: Using the group-generated charts displayed in the room, write an expository paper about the three states of matter from the point of view of a water molecule.

I'm something cold, frozen, a solid too. Give up?
I'm an ice cube in the freezer.

Soon a giant hand reaches to grab me,
but I'm sure they think I'm cold because
they plop me into a glass. Soon I'm the
giant's mouth, and boy it's hot in here! I realize
I'm shrinking! Soon my particles started to
move apart I'm now liquid water running
down the giant's mouth. Actually I sort
of like this new change. My particles
have more room to move around. I'm
also sunny and these sight (inside the
giant) are amazing, but there's a lot of red.
From where I come from (the freezer) there's
loads of blue, black but red is very

name.

I think I'm about to the bottom
of the giant. When I hear a crash
and I'm outside in the cold air
again except I'm changed to a gas!
I'm a whitish color. I'm finding out
that the higher I go the colder it
gets!

**Student Paper #1
(Fifth Grade Student)
Exemplary Example
Six Traits Scores and Commentary**

Title: “States of Matter”

Ideas and Content: [5]

- Ideas and content accurately answer the prompt.
- The writer seems to draw from knowledge of the subject.
- Details of molecular make-up add significant information.

Organization: [4]

- Introductory sentence creates interest.
- The writer moves from one state of matter to another in logical steps.
- The structure matches the purpose and audience.

Voice: [5]

- The writer seems to be interested in the topic.
- The tone is interesting and imaginative.

Word Choice: [4]

- Words are functional and correct.

Sentence Fluency: [4]

- Sentences vary in length.
- Several sentences begin the same way.
- The writing flows naturally.

Conventions: [4]

- The writer demonstrates generally good writing conventions.
- Paragraphs at each change of matter would help guide the reader.

OVERALL SCORE: [4]

I never

I lost the waterpark. I'm a tiny drop of water going through tubes and being splashed around. It's really noisy and I'm having fun. A lot of my friends are here too. While I was playing around, POOF I walked into the hot air.

Looking down and seeing the earth is awesome. As I travel higher into the atmosphere and it gets colder and colder. I'm getting heavier and heavier. My friends and I are sticking together. Suddenly I feel wind and, expect I feel even stronger. Like I see lots of lightning, big and small. I've been here for awhile.

Now it is winter. I have lots of people ice skating. Oh no no no no people no crunch, Ouch!

**Student Paper #2
(Fifth Grade Student)
Average Example
Six Traits Scores and Commentary**

Title: “States of Matter”

Ideas and Content: [4]

- The paper answers the prompt.
- Some basic knowledge of the topic is displayed.

Organization: [3]

- The introductory sentence doesn't establish purpose and topic.
- The paper doesn't really conclude.
- Transition words make the process clear.

Voice: [4]

- The writer speaks directly to the audience.
- The tone is enthusiastic and energetic.

Word Choice: [3]

- Words are adequate and correct.
- Words representing sounds are strong.

Sentence Fluency: [3]

- Sentences vary in length and structure.
- Transitions are adequate.

Conventions: [3]

- The writer demonstrates a grasp of standard writing conventions.
- Errors are few.

OVERALL SCORE: [3]

- the three states
in. It was floating there in the air
I got hit by a rain drop. ~~On~~
then I went threw his biome
At least I think that's what I
thought it was but it was grey and
red. Next I was frozen and
ended up at Alaska. I thought
that it was cool going to see
all the three states of matter.

**Student Paper #3
(Fifth Grade Student)
Below Average Example
Six Traits Scores and Commentary**

Title: “States of Matter”

Ideas and Content: [2]

- The paper attempts to answer the prompt.
- The states of matter are shown in the writing.

Organization: [2]

- The paper has a concluding sentence.
- Connections between sentences are attempted.

Voice: [1]

- The development of the topic is limited.
- The writer gives a little insight into feelings.

Word Choice: [1]

- Words are nonspecific.
- Words do not show subject knowledge.

Sentence Fluency: [2]

- Sentences vary in length and structure.
- Some sentences are connected logically.

Conventions: [2]

- Most words are spelled correctly.
- Conventions are generally correct.

OVERALL SCORE: [2]